



Last year, we discussed in length our Church Covenant. It is fervently hoped that each of us have already developed a great understanding, love, and loyalty to our Church. As the Saviour gave Himself for her, may each of us indeed learn to give our own selves to her, too.

In relation to the above, this 2023, let each of us seek to excel in the things that may edify our beloved Christian Bible Baptist Church-Los Baños (CBBC-LB). This time, we ought to understand that every member of the Church must excel in the marks that the Baptists have been known through the ages. By doing so, we shall indeed edify not only our own selves but the Church as a corporate body of Christ.

Excel is God's word and honors His character. Psalm 103:20 says it is a quality required to those who will bless and serve God. The verse says, "Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearken unto the voice of his word."

The word, excel, appears five times in five different verses and occasions in the entire Bible. The term excellest and excelled are also used each in two different verses. Moreover, the word is the root of "excellent" and "excellency" and are both found in the Holy Writ. Excellent is used 34 times in 34 verses while excellency is used 26 times in 23 verses.

To excel is therefore a very important issue that each of us must face and be willing to become.

To excel means to go beyond, to exceed, to surpass in good qualities or laudable deeds. It also means to outdo an existing great record. It is generally employed in carrying out our duties and responsibilities, hence, to excel means to perform meritorious actions and doing the same to an unusual degree. The results of which are eminence, illustrious, and/or distinguished.

Excelling however as intended in the Word is never self-serving. It is serving others for the glory of God. Hence, as expressed clearly in our 2023 theme verse as well as this week's memory verse, we ought to excel to edify.

The word edify means to build, to instruct and improve the mind in knowledge generally, and particularly in moral and religious knowledge, in faith and holiness.

Here is a statement underscoring the context by which excelling is to be made – our zealous-

ness of spiritual gifts. Spiritual gifts are gifts of the Spirit. These are extraordinary gifts bestowed upon the believer for Church works. They are not natural abilities but are heavenly bestowment and are spiritual abilities. These abilities are not to be used for earthly gains. They are solely gifts for the Church's benefits.

Here is a statement that spells out our involvement in these gifts – seeking to excel. Our hearts and minds and bodies must all be involved in discharging such gifts (1 Tim. 4:14-15). Indeed, we must seek to exercise these gifts, develop the same continuously, and faithfully use them only in the Church.

Here further is the end goal of employing these gifts – to the edifying of the church. To edify means to construct, build up or establish. In the exercise of the spiritual gifts, we build ourselves, our co-members, and the Church as a whole. It is never a competition as to who excels best but a complementation until each becomes the best in God's eyes. Rom. 14:19 says, "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."

As we embark this new year, let us take heed of verse 20 of our text.

Let us understand like men of valour that God wanted us to be. Let each of us understand the value of every single soul. Let each of us understand as matured men the value of our spiritual gifts. Like men with the mind of Christ, let us understand the value of the Church He founded. Like our Saviour, each must see as He sees the future and eternity.

May through this new year we outgrow our childlike understanding. May we rise from our: nonproficiency in knowledge; want of capacity to receive, bear, and digest strong meat; levity, fickleness, and inconstancy; unskillfulness in the word; deficiency of knowledge as well as want of understanding of things both natural and spiritual.

Since our understandings were opened and enlightened; since our understandings were given us by the Spirit of God; since we have the Scriptures, which are able to make wise unto salvation and the man of God perfect; and since we have the ministers of the Gospel to explain divine truths to us; may each of us then EXCEL TO EDIFY IN 2023 and beyond!

EXCEL TO EDIFY 2023 SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON
TITLE: EXCEL TO EDIFY THE SPIRIT
TEXT: I CORINTHIANS 14:1-20
MEMORY VERSE: I CORINTHIANS 14:12

I. EXCEL TO EDIFY SPRINGS FROM OUR BIBLE UNDERSTANDING OF OUR _____ ABILITIES.

A. Our text in verse 1 says, "... desire spiritual gifts..." This is a _____ to each member of the Church. The word desire is a verb which, in the Scriptures, usually means "to long for," "to ask for," and "to demand" to be used in a good or bad sense. Other Bible terms that refer to this word include delight, precious, seek, and give thanks. It is therefore a personal responsibility of every member to pray for such gifts so each could work in the ministry.

B. Our earnestness to have these gifts lies in our true _____ of spiritual gifts. Spiritual gifts are something new to each of us. It is not a natural thing inherent to humankind. It is from above, from the Spirit.

C. Paul discusses this in I Cor. 12:1-13. He said in verse 1 that each of us must not be _____ concerning spiritual gifts. In the said account, Paul mentions of the following:

1. It is for the saved (Verse 3). This is the exclusive character of the saved. The saved is quickened by the Spirit, indwelt by the Spirit, and only through the Spirit we call Abba, Father. It is by the Spirit that we are sealed on the day of redemption. Our regeneration is by the Spirit.
2. It is the Spirit that administers the different gifts to members of the Church (Verses 4-6).
3. Every believer member of the Church has been bestowed with a gift. Verses 7-11 clearly expresses this truth. It says in part, "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge ... To another faith ... to another the gifts of healing ... To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues. But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."

D. _____ are abilities each of us need in the ministry. As we

have been called by God to His vineyard, He enables us through these gifts.

1. We remember that our calling was never based on our inherent abilities (I Cor. 1:26-29).

2. Thus, whatever task each of us are assigned in the Church, none of us should never say, "I am not capable. I do not know how to do it." These are simply excuses. God bestows these gifts so we could effectively function in His body. Paul realized this in I Tim. 1:12.

II. EXCEL TO EDIFY IS POSSIBLE ONLY IN THE _____ OF THE CHURCH.

A. Our text in verses 4 mentions, "...he that prophesieth edifieth the church." Verse 5 of our text further compares two gifts that may accrue _____ to the Church. It reads, "I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying."

B. Church is the _____ of God. It is His creation. The Bible is filled with accounts relating her eternal and Divine value. Let us consider again the following: Acts 20:28, Eph. 5:25, Eph. 3:21, Rev. 21:2, II Cor. 11:2, Luke 5:33-35).

C. There is never a _____ ministry. Everything we do must be Church-centered. God blesses service rendered to Him through His Church. It is in this context that our theme verse last year must be viewed and appreciated (I Cor. 15:58).

D. God called us all to be of _____ to His Church. Remember, the Church is His temple (I Cor. 3:16-17). The Church therefore has no room for competition, strife, schism, and disorderliness. Each is called to make sure Christ is magnified and gets the preeminence in the Church!

E. _____ of saints is only possible in the Church (Eph. 4:11-14).

1. First is the perfection of the saints. The word perfect does not mean sinlessness but matured. By being faithful in the Church in her assembling as well as in carrying out her mandate, every member grows to maturity. A mature Christian is measured by his fruitfulness in the ministry, by his involvement in the activities of the Church no matter the cost, and by his support to the carrying out of the Church's works despite trials and persecutions.

2. Second is the work of the ministry. The preaching of the Gospel is a work, and a laborious one, and that no man is sufficient for of himself. Such work requires faithfulness, and is a good work, and when well performed, those concerned in it are worthy of respect, esteem, and honour. Preaching and teaching of the Word are a ministering work. Such are a service and not a dominion.
3. Third is the edification of the body of Christ. A body is said to be edified by the unity of all its members. When the members move and act as one man, unity is displayed and we can say that the body is edified. When all members stand for the same doctrines and the faith of the Son of God, unity is exemplified.
4. Fourth is Christlikeness of every single member of the Church. Members must measure up to the stature of the fulness of Christ. Our Saviour is the author and finisher of our faith. When a member has faith like that of Abraham as described in Rom. 4:18-21, we say that he has measured up to the stature of Christ. A member must then learn to believe in hope though everything goes against hope. When a believer, knowing his nothingness, will not stagger at the promise of God through unbelief, then he has come to the stature of Christ. Likewise, when a believer, not visibly seeing God's promise, yet "being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform," he has the faith of Christ indeed.
5. All of the above goals however could only be fulfilled by the power of the Holy Spirit.

III. EXCEL TO EDIFY IS BEST ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH THE _____ AND HIS _____.

- A. Christian service must always be done in the _____ (Verse 14-15, Zec. 4:6).
- B. The OT prefigures the above primacy of the _____ in the service of the Lord (Lev. 6:13). In the NT, the Holy Spirit is presented as fire (Acts 2:3-4; I Thess. 5:19).
- C. Spirit-led ministry brings _____ to the people being ministered (Verse 19). We must bear in mind that non-understanding is sin (Rom. 1:31). Non-understanding in fact leads to evil-doing (Jer. 4:22). A fervent prayer therefore by both the minister and the ministered for the Spirit's leading should be constantly

made.

- D. Spirit-led service is _____. Verse 16 records, "Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?" Every service we render must bring comfort and joy to recipients. Such results are known to have taken place when people respond with their amens, meaning, so be it or we agree. This takes place with the convicting power of the Spirit. Without the Spirit's intervention, the minister's efforts are but a display of human abilities. It is therefore the minister's prime duty to seek first God and His leadership before ministering commences.
- E. Spirit-led ministry produces a _____ heart and spirit (Verse 17). Thus, in the exercise of our gifts each must excel indeed in the Spirit's power so as to bring people to their praises to God. When the minister excels but by his flesh, no genuine thanksgiving takes place. It is therefore the duty of the minister to seek the power on high to effect such thankful spirit in those ministered.

PENTECOSTAL POWER

Lord, as of old at Pentecost
Thou didst Thy power display,
With cleansing, purifying flame,
Descend on us today.

Lord, send the old time power,
the Pentecostal power!
Thy floodgates of blessing
on us throw open wide!
Lord, send the old time power,
the Pentecostal power,
That sinners be converted
and Thy name glorified!

For mighty works for Thee, prepare
And strengthen ev'ry heart;
Come, take possession of Thine own,
And nevermore depart.

All self consume, all sin destroy!
With earnest zeal endue
Each waiting heart to work for Thee;
O Lord, our faith renew!

Speak, Lord! before Thy throne we wait,
Thy promise we believe,
And will not let Thee go until
The blessing we receive.

BIBLE READING SCHEDULE DAY 129-123

1 Chronicles 22-25:

- Mon 2-JAN
- (1) Why did David prepare such great quantities of materials for building the temple?
 - (2) What was the purpose of the temple?
 - (3) Why did David organize the Levites, priests, and musicians? What did they do?

1 Chronicles 26-28:

- Tue 3-JAN
- (1) In chapter 26, some were blessed with unusual ability or numerous descendants, some were chosen by sacred lot, and some had a role of service simply because of their ancestry. In all these, what attribute of the LORD do we see in a person's life?
 - (2) Chapter 27 describes organization and leadership. How do these 2 themes relate?
 - (3) In chapter 28, what was the key to David's plans for the temple and God's blessing?

1 Chronicles 29-2 Chronicles 3:

- Wed 4-JAN
- (1) Why did God's people give abundantly in 1 Chronicles 29?
 - (2) What was Solomon's greatest desire in 2 Chronicles 1?
 - (3) Based on the description of the materials, craftsmanship, and construction of the temple, how would you describe this place of offering worship and prayer?

2 Chronicles 4-6:

- Thu 5-JAN
- (1) What were the 2-3 kinds of resources used to make the instruments for worship?
 - (2) When did the glory of the LORD fill the temple?
 - (3) What was Solomon's main, repeated prayer request regarding the temple?

2 Chronicles 7-9:

- Fri 6-JAN
- (1) What was the main attribute of God that His people praised and rejoiced in?
 - (2) The LORD's promise and warning to Solomon one night explains Israel's future. What is the condition that determines their future?
 - (3) How did Solomon's wealth, wisdom, and power turn foreigners to the LORD?

2 Chronicles 10-13:

- Sat 7-JAN
- (1) Who ultimately caused the division between Israel and Judah to fulfill His warning that He would judge His people for breaking covenant?
 - (2) Why did the priests and Levites in the northern tribes move to Judah and support Rehoboam? (the same reason that Abijah gave before God fought Jeroboam)
 - (3) What was the common sin of both Rehoboam and Jeroboam?

Sun 8-JAN **PSALMS 71-72**

2023 CHURCH CALENDAR

January 2023

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|----|---|
| 8 | CBBC Noveleta Stewardship Conference |
| 22 | CBBM Binangonan Anniversary |
| 26 | CBBM Binangonan Evangelistic Meeting |
| 29 | CBBM Binangonan Grand Anniversary CBBM Teresa Firstfruits Sunday |

February 2023

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| 7-8 | Round-the-Clock Prayer & Fasting, Lord's Supper, and Revival |
| 12 | Pre-foundation Day Revival Sunday |
| 13 | Foundation Day/Revival |
| 14-16 | CBBC SP Baptist Distinctives King James Bible Conference |
| 17 | CBBC Noveleta Couples Conference |
| 19 | First fruits & Dedication Sunday CBBC Dasma Couples Night |
| 20 | Couples & Single Parents Conference |
| 21 | CBBC Antipolo Couples Night CBBM Las Pinas Couples Night |
| 22 | CBBC Candelaria Couples Night |
| 26 | 39 th Church Anniversary (North) |
| 28 | Bible Parade/Motorcade |

March 2023

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| 1-2 | CBBC Noveleta Revival |
| 3 | Pastor's Birthday CBBC Dasma Lord's Supper and Revival |
| 5 | 39 th Church Anniversary (South) |
| 9 | CBBC Silang Revival Night |
| 12 | 39 th Church Anniversary (Outreaches) |
| 16 | CBBC Imus Revival |
| 19 | Grand Anniversary & Victory Sunday |
| 23 | CBBC Antipolo Youth Revival CBBC SFLU Bible Conference |

LAST WEEK'S ATTENDANCE

| | | | |
|------------|-----|---------|---|
| Sunday AM | 529 | FTV | 6 |
| Sunday PM | 288 | Baptism | - |
| Prayer Mtg | 177 | | |

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